

To the FCC,
My name is Michael E. Huff. I live In Atlanta Georgia and have been on the Georgia Music Industry Association (GMIA), Board of Directors for several years. I am also a songwriter and have a deep rooted love of music. I believe music plays a most important part of everyones daily life.

Although I have had only one song recorded and distributed on an artists album, I have had the joy of living the entire experience from beginning to end of that journey. It was an awesome experience and will cherish those memories for the rest of my life.

I have also written several songs that have been published and have gained both local and national attention as well as winning and placing in dozens of songwriting contests.

It has been my personal experience since the mid 1990's, that getting a song played on the local radio was impossible "unless you were in the top 30 or 40 on National Playlist".

The quote above taken from a personal friend of mine that is a very well know DJ here in Atlanta and has won the national DJ of the year at the L.A. awards ceremony a few years ago.

Being on the Board of Directors of GMIA, we were fortunate enough, one time, because of our friendship with the Program Director of a local radio station, able to get the top 3 contestant winners songs played on the air in an early morning slot.

I know beyond a shadow of a doubt, that had we not been personal friends, this would not have been possible.

Main stream Radio stations care about one thing and one thing only; the bottom line. And to get that bottom line where they want it, they feel that they HAVE to play the top 30 songs on the National Playlist.

I believe that the FCC could assit with this 'problem' by having some sort of rule and/or regulation that requires major radio stations to play local music judged to be 'worthy' by an independent panel such as GMIA or other groups of that type.

For Example NARAS out of Nashville Tn. or some other non affilated music industry group.

I beleive, as I stated in the paragraph above that the FCC should allow an independent, non-affiliated music assiciation to decide what is judged to be worthy to be aired.

Either that or the independent association could work together in concert with the program manager of the specific radio station to decide.

This would enable a filtering process of sort to sort out the music that is offensive to young listeners or just plain 'bad' not to reach the airwaves.

If the decision is left to the radio station, this would come off as being 'unfair' to many. Adding the independent association would keep this from happening.

I believe the traditional sense of news radio, public affairs and entertainment other than music, and sports is covered fairly well through other avenues such as am talk radio stations, commercials and sports events etc.

I also believe that it is very important for radio coverage of important community activities such as fund raisers and charity events like those of hospitals and churches.

This could count toward localism requirements and it would be an opportunity for the listener to actually hear 'Good News' type programming.

The way it is now, all media dosen't consider it news worthy unless it bad news. we need to heard 'Good' news in these times of trouble in the world.

I do not know, specifically, what types of payola practices occur today nor how frequently they occur, but I'm almost positive it happens. The Radio industry will never let this 'cat out of the bag' so long as it is not fully investigated. Even then, I would expect, it will not be known as this practice, as many others of the same nature, are transacted 'under the table'and more than likely, in cash.

If Payments are made to radio stations by "Indie promoters", this should be regulated by the FCC and should be prohibited, as it should be prohibited by all who attempt to pay to have their songs played. This only allows those with deep pockets to get their songs and music played and heard by the public. This music industry is too "closed" and cut-throat as it is. There needs to be a more level playing field to enable the 'little guys' with just as much, if not more talent, than the ones that were "lucky enough" to be in the right place at the right time, or who, more often than not, knew the right people, to get to where they are today.

I don't believe if an artist chooses to perform a free concert, that should be considered 'Payola' and I believe that Record Lables should be allowed to buy 'Ad /commercial spots' to promote their artist only if they are no longer than 30 to 60 seconds like a regular commercial.

I do not know if radio stations are being paid for front and back end announcements but they should not be paid for this. They stations should do this with out payment as a favor to the listener. This is a good practice the station can use to promote the singer, the songwriter and/or the band. I often want to know 'who was that' when I hear a song that I like on the radio. When they tell me, I am much more likely to but the CD.

I believe voice tracking is an out-right lie to the public and should not be permitted unless the public is notified before, during and after each segmant that has been pre-recorded. I believe it is inconsistant with the broadcasters obligations to serve the local interests and that it misleads the public in many ways.

National playlists are the demise of localism programing at most if not all of todays mainstream radio stations.

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Main stream Radio stations care about one thing and one thing only; the bottom line. And to get that bottom line where they want it, they feel that they HAVE to play the top 30 songs on the National Playlist.

I believe LPFM stations have their place in our world as long as they have to abide by the same rules and regulations as the 'Big Guys'. I think that this would be a great way to get 'local' music out but I also believe, that the listening audience is so limited that it doesn't do much good for the local artist(s). I am also concerned about the increased air wave activity and interference with other more powerful stations. I also have health concerns about this practice. I think more research should be required on the part of the FCC before too many more of these licenses are provided.

I would like to thank you, the FCC, for allowing me to share my thoughts and perspectives with you at this time. I would also hope that my remarks be taken into consideration and my thoughts shared in a public forum for further discussion of this matter.

Thank you -

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